

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

**Claim 1 (Currently Amended):** An ink jet recording medium comprising a substrate and a plurality of ink absorption layers provided thereon, wherein an ~~upper~~ uppermost layer of the ink absorption layers contains inorganic pigment, a binder and thermoplastic particles having a glass transition point of 78 to 150°C, and the content by weight of the inorganic pigment being greater than that of the thermoplastic particles.

**Claim 2 (Withdrawn):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the medium is subjected to image recording employing pigment ink.

**Claim 3 (Withdrawn):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the medium is subjected to image recording and then subjected to heating treatment.

**Claim 4 (Currently Amended):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein at least one of the plural ink absorption layers except for the ~~upper~~ uppermost layer contains inorganic pigment.

**Claim 5 (Original):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the inorganic pigment is silica.

**Claim 6 (Original):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the inorganic pigment is alumina.

**Claim 7 (Original):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the content ratio by weight of thermoplastic particles/inorganic pigment is from 45/55 to 10/90.

**Claim 8 (Currently Amended):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the solid content of the thermoplastic particles contained in the ~~upper~~ uppermost layer is from 0.5 to 15 g/m<sup>2</sup> of the medium.

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**Claim 9 (Currently Amended):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the solid content of the ~~upper~~ uppermost layer is from 2 to 50 g/m<sup>2</sup> of the medium.

**Claim 10 (Canceled).**

**Claim 11 (Original):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 4, wherein the inorganic pigment is silica.

**Claim 12 (Original):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 4, wherein the inorganic pigment is alumina.

**Claim 13 (Currently Amended):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 4, wherein at least one of the plural ink absorption layers except for the ~~upper~~ uppermost layer contains inorganic pigment in an amount of not less than 50% by weight.

**Claim 14 (Currently Amended):** An ink jet recording medium comprising a substrate and provided thereon, ~~an upper~~ a layer containing inorganic pigment in an amount of 30 to 70% by weight, a binder and thermoplastic particles having a glass transition

point of 78 to 150°C, the ~~upper~~ layer being a single layer, wherein the content ratio by weight of inorganic pigment/thermoplastic particles is from 3/7 to less than 7/3.

**Claim 15 (Withdrawn):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 14, wherein the medium is subjected to image recording employing pigment ink.

**Claim 16 (Withdrawn):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 14, wherein the medium is subjected to image recording and then subjected to heating treatment.

**Claim 17 (Currently Amended):** An ink jet recording medium comprising a substrate and a plurality of ink absorption layers provided thereon, wherein an ~~upper~~ uppermost layer of the ink absorption layers contains inorganic pigment in an amount of 30 to 70% by weight, a binder and thermoplastic particles having a glass transition point of 78 to 150°C, and wherein the content ratio by weight of inorganic pigment/thermoplastic particles is from 3/7 to less than 7/3 by weight.

**Claim 18 (Withdrawn):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 17, wherein the medium is subjected to image recording employing pigment ink.

**Claim 19 (Withdrawn):** The ink jet recording medium of claim 17, wherein the medium is subjected to image recording and then subjected to heating treatment.

**Claim 20 (Withdrawn-Currently Amended):** A method of manufacturing the ink jet recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises the step of simultaneously coating the ~~upper~~ uppermost layer and the layer adjoining the ~~upper~~ uppermost layer on the substrate.

**Claim 21 (Canceled).**

**Claim 22 (Withdrawn):** The method of claim 20, wherein all of the plural ink absorption layers are simultaneously multi-layer coated.

**Claims 23-26 (Canceled).**

**Claim 27 (Previously Presented):** An ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the substrate has a base paper laminated with polyethylene film on both sides.

**Claim 28 (Previously Presented):** An ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the inorganic pigment is a gas phase method silica.

**Claim 29 (Previously Presented):** An ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein an average primary particle size of the inorganic pigment is from 4 to 50 nm.

**Claim 30 (Previously Presented):** An ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein an average particle size of the thermoplastic particles is from 0.1 to 5  $\mu\text{m}$ .

**Claim 31 (Canceled).**

**Claim 32 (Previously Presented):** An ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein a solid content of the thermoplastic particles is from 1 to 7 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

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**Claim 33 (Canceled).**

**Claim 34 (Previously Presented):** An ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein a residual monomer content in the thermoplastic particles is not more than 1% by weight.

**Claim 35 (Previously Presented):** An ink jet recording medium of claim 1, wherein the binder is a polyvinyl alcohol.